

The 2 Kings record of Hezekiah

A. Introduction

18:1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. 2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. 3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

B. Early events in the reign of Hezekiah

i. Purge of idolatry

a. 4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that **Moses** had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

b. 5 **He trusted in the LORD** God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.

a'. 6 For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded **Moses**.

b'. 7 **And the LORD was with him;** and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. 8 He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

ii. Threat of Assyria

a. 9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

b. 10 And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

c. 11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: 12 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that **Moses** the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.

C. Assyrian invasion

a. 13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib **king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah**, and took them.

b. 14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou putttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of **silver** and thirty talents of **gold**.

b'. 15 And Hezekiah gave him all the **silver** that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. 16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off the **gold** from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

a'. 17 And **the king of Assyria** sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host **against Jerusalem**. And they went up and came to Jerusalem.

D. Rabshakeh's challenge

i. first speech

a'. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field. 8 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them **Eliakim the son of Hilkiah**, which was over the household, and **Shebna** the scribe, and **Joah** the son of Asaph the recorder. 19 And Rabshakeh said unto them, **Speak ye now to Hezekiah**, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou **trustest**? 20 Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou **trust**, that thou rebellest against me?

b. 21 Now, behold, thou **trustest** upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon **Egypt**, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of **Egypt** unto all that **trust** on him.

c. 22 But if ye say unto me, We **trust** in the **LORD** our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

b'. 23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. 24 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy **trust** on **Egypt** for chariots and for horsemen?

c'. 25 Am I now come up without the **LORD** against this place to destroy it? The **LORD** said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

a'. 26 Then said **Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah**, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. 27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, **to speak these words**? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

ii. second speech

a. 28 Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: 29 Thus saith the king,

b. Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: 30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, **The LORD will surely deliver us**, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. 31 **Hearken not to Hezekiah:**

c. for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern: 32 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die:

b'. and **hearken not unto Hezekiah**, when he persuadeth you, saying, **The LORD will deliver us**. 33 Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 **Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?** 35 Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, **that the LORD should deliver** Jerusalem out of mine hand?

a'. 36 But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

E. Hezekiah goes to temple and sends for Isaiah

a. 37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh. 19:1 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

b. 3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. 4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left.

a'. 5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

b'. 6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. 7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

F. Rabshakeh sends letter to Hezekiah

8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. 9 And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, 10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou **trustest** deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? 12 **Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar? 13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?**

E'. Hezekiah goes up to the temple with the letter

14 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. 16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. 17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, 18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

D'. Yahweh's Answer to Sennacherib

i. Denouncing Assyria

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. 21 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him;

The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?
and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice,
and lifted up thine eyes on high?
even against the Holy One of Israel.

23 By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said,

With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains,
to the sides of Lebanon,

and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof,
and the choice fir trees thereof:

and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders,
and into the forest of his Carmel.

24 I have digged and drunk strange waters,
and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.

25 Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it,
and of ancient times that I have formed it?

now have I brought it to pass,
that thou shouldest be to lay waste
fenced cities into ruinous heaps.

26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power,
they were dismayed and confounded;

they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb,
as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

27 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in,
and thy rage against me.

28 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears,
therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips,
and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

ii. Promise to Hezekiah

29 And this shall be a sign unto thee,
Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves,
and in the second year that which springeth of the same;
and in the third year sow ye, and reap,
and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

30 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah
shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

31 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant,
and they that escape out of mount Zion:

the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria,
He shall not come into this city,
nor shoot an arrow there,
nor come before it with shield,
nor cast a bank against it.

33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return,
and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

34 For I will defend this city, to save it,
for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

C'. Assyrian army destroyed

35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

B'. Later part of Hezekiah's life

i. Extension of life

a. 20:1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

b. 2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

b'. 4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: **behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.** 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

a'. 7 And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

a. 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that **the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?**

b. 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

c. 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let **the shadow return backward ten degrees.**

d. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and **he brought the shadow ten degrees backward**, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.

ii. Invitation to Babylon backfires

a. 12 At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: **there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.**

b. 14 Then came **Isaiah** the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee?

c'. And **Hezekiah** said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.

a'. 15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, **All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.**

b'. 16 And **Isaiah** said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

c'. 19 Then said **Hezekiah** unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?

A'. *Epilogue*

20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.